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President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Outlule (Botswana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, President of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session

The Acting President: Before we take up the item on our agenda for this morning, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of the late Rüdiger von Wechmar, President of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session and eighth emergency special session, who passed away on Wednesday, 17 October 2007.

A journalist, politician and diplomat, His Excellency Mr. von Wechmar had a distinguished career in international news agencies as well as in the information media and foreign service of his country. From 1974 to 1980 he was the permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations.

As President of the General Assembly, Mr. von Wechmar played an outstanding role in the Organization, and made a major contribution towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the Charter.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Germany and to the bereaved family of Mr. von Wechmar.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, former President of the General Assembly.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I am speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, which was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Rüdiger von Wechmar, and, through me, expresses its profound condolences to the Assembly, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German people and his family.

Rüdiger von Wechmar was a soldier in the Afrika Korps. After the Second World War, he made his mark as a journalist, politician and eminent diplomat.

As a spokesman for the Government of Willy Brandt, Mr. von Wechmar left his mark on his time and era as a fervent worker for Ostpolitik and rapprochement between East and West, at the side of one of the most brilliant German statesmen of the twentieth century.

From 1974 to 1981, as ambassador and permanent representative of his country to the United Nations in New York, he took on great responsibilities, including the highest responsibility of the Organization, that of President of the General Assembly. Under his guidance, at its thirty-fifth session the Assembly adopted important resolutions that speak volumes about his tremendous contribution

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to the quest for solutions to the major challenges facing mankind. It was under his presidency that the Assembly adopted the declaration on the Second Disarmament Decade at a time when détente was becoming a reality and needed to be reinforced — witness the great disarmament treaties negotiated within the Assembly during the 1980s.

The thirty-fifth session was also a decisive turning point in the promotion of economic and social development, as indicated by the adoption of important resolutions on the protection of the environment, following the commitment of his country to this great cause. One of the most important resolutions of the session was resolution 35/8, "Historical responsibility of States for the preservation of nature for present and future generations".

It was also during the thirty-fifth session that the first World Food Day, now commemorated annually on 16 October, was proclaimed, as well as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

Africa identifies with the work done by this eminent diplomat, which made possible notable progress in combating hunger in the world and in guaranteeing the right to access to water, which remains central to the concerns of the continent.

The decisions of the thirty-fifth session gave impetus to the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. It is in the wake of that initiative, certainly, that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification finds its place. The decisions prepared the ground for the international mobilization that led to the holding of the major international conferences in the 1990s.

It was at the thirty-fifth session that the concept of the special needs of Africa emerged at the United Nations, with the momentum created by the Lagos Plan of Action, which preceded the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to a certain extent. Some 20 resolutions concerning assistance to African countries were adopted at the thirty-fifth session.

Africa owes much to the leadership of Mr. von Wechmar. The African Group pays a well-deserved tribute to the memory of that great man and to his country, the Federal Republic of Germany, which he worthily represented for more than a decade in New York.

Rüdiger von Wechmar served with loyalty and distinction the spirit of multilateralism and the ideals of the Organization. The United Nations must cherish his memory as a great and highly skilled diplomat of our times.

Mr. Cho Hyun (Republic of Korea): As Chair of the Asian Group for the month of October, I would like to express our condolences to the Government and people of Germany on the passing of His Excellency Ambassador Rüdiger von Wechmar. May he rest in peace.

Ambassador von Wechmar was for many years a friend to the United Nations. As the permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, he served as Vice-President of the General Assembly and of the First Committee, and as President of the Security Council. In 1980, he undertook the responsibilities of President of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

Beyond his work with this Organization, Ambassador von Wechmar led a life dedicated to service, not only as a diplomat, but also as a journalist courageously reporting from Eastern European countries during the cold war. Ambassador von Wechmar is remembered fondly by those who were lucky enough to work with him. His kindness, decency and commitment to bettering the world stand as examples that all of us in the United Nations family should strive to follow.

The member States of the Asian Group are grateful for the years of devoted service that Ambassador von Wechmar gave to the United Nations, and we extend our sympathies and kind wishes to the bereaved.

May God bless Ambassador von Wechmar, and may God bless all those who knew him and who mourn his loss.

Mr. Towpik (Poland): On this sad occasion, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

We mark today the passing of Baron Rüdiger von Wechmar — an excellent German journalist, politician, diplomat and the President of the General Assembly. His life is an example of the complicated biographies of the twenty century. During his rich and multidimensional career, Rüdiger von Wechmar demonstrated great determination in overcoming the

difficult legacy of the past. He proved his deepest commitment to the values and principles upon which our Organization is based. His contribution to the work of the United Nations was outstanding.

As permanent representative of Germany to the United Nation and as President of the General Assembly, he gave many years of dedicated service to our Organization. He contributed significantly to international efforts to promote peace and stability, rapprochement of nations and justice in the world. We all will remember and cherish his great diplomatic passion, his personal character, his voice of reason and his devotion to the United Nations and to the world diplomatic community.

On behalf of the Eastern European group, I would like to convey to the Government and people of Germany, as well as to the family of Ambassador von Wechmar, our deepest sympathy and most sincere condolences.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, I have the honour to pay a posthumous tribute to the former President of the General Assembly, Baron Rüdiger von Wechmar, who passed away recently.

Ambassador von Wechmar had a long and distinguished career at the service of his nation, Germany. It is particularly noteworthy that when he was only 17 years old he fought in the Second World War and was taken prisoner. After becoming a journalist he entered the diplomatic service of his country. That change in his life is an example of someone who, having been within the conflagration and having intimate knowledge of its devastating consequences, embraces new professions geared to spreading the truth in the ongoing quest for international peace.

As a result, he also held several important positions in the Federal Republic of Germany, including Under-Secretary of State and Government spokesman. More specifically in the diplomatic multilateral sphere, in 1974 he was appointed ambassador to the United Nations, and he represented Germany with distinction on the Security Council in 1977 and 1978. He was elected President of the General Assembly for its thirty-fifth session, from 1980 to 1981, and he also presided over the eighth emergency special session.

He was a key player in the multilateral sphere at a time when the United Nations was also part of the cold war, demonstrating his remarkable professional capacity and steadfast vocation to achieve the timeless goals of the Organization.

At this moment of grief my delegation extends its most heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Germany, and in particular to the members of his family for their profound loss.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): As Chairman of the Western European and Other States Group for October, I have the sad duty of extending our heartfelt condolences over the loss of a great diplomat who contributed in many capacities to the realization of the ideals and objectives enshrined in the Charter. Indeed, the passing away of Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1974 to 1981, and President of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, is a great loss not only for his family and country, but for the entire United Nations community.

He was elected President of the General Assembly in 1980, at a time when the United Nations was faced with formidable challenges. The bipolar character of the international system was at its climax, and the United Nations was searching for innovative ways to provide effective solutions to the problems of our globe.

As President of the General Assembly at that critical time, Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar worked resolutely to bridge the differences and pave avenues of cooperation. His efforts were in many cases instrumental in the adoption of important resolutions dealing with a wide array of issues, ranging from development to disarmament. That is why, after almost 30 years, his contributions from the Chair are still vividly remembered and appreciated.

For instance, in his inaugural address upon election as the President of the General Assembly, he strongly stressed the importance of addressing the legitimate needs of the underdeveloped countries, and called for a new economic order in which the rich and the poor would join hands for a truly common and prosperous future. I believe his remarks make even more sense today.

I conclude by paying tribute to the distinctive heritage of Rüdiger von Wechmar and conveying once

again our heartfelt sympathy to his family, friends and colleagues.

Mr. Young (United States of America): I speak on behalf of the host country, which extends its sincerest condolences on the passing of Rüdiger von Wechmar, a great diplomat and friend of the United Nations.

We appreciate Mr. von Wechmar's long-term commitment and service to the ideals of the United Nations, first as the permanent representative of the Federal Republic of Germany and then as the thirty-fifth President of the General Assembly, from 1980 to 1981. He is remembered as a charismatic, effective and talented diplomat.

We extend our sincerest sympathy to his family, friends and colleagues. The entire United Nations community mourns the loss of this good friend and skilled diplomat.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): On behalf of the Federal Government, and also in the name of the family of the late Rüdiger von Wechmar, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the warm words of sympathy expressed by previous speakers.

Rüdiger von Wechmar was the longest-serving permanent representative of Germany to date, heading the Permanent Mission from 1974 to 1981. He represented his country here in New York in a period that might be called the formative years of Germany at the United Nations. Having served previously as spokesman to Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt, he became the first permanent representative to be appointed after the admission of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations in 1973.

After the election of the Federal Republic as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 1977, he represented the Federal Republic in the Council from 1977 to 1978. He crowned his career at the United Nations by being elected President of the General Assembly in 1980.

As President of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, he worked relentlessly for a number of very important issues on the agenda at that time. He partook in the General Assembly's achievements, but also — as he himself frankly admitted in his last statement as President — in the many drawbacks. In his typical straightforward way of speaking, he did not shy away from calling the Assembly he had presided over an Assembly of frustrations. One of the frustrations he identified was the working methods of the General Assembly. "Our General Assembly — indeed our United Nations," he said, "is being slowly suffocated by too many resolutions, too many meetings, too many subsidiary organs, far too much documentation." (*A/36/PV.1, para.32*)

But, being a man of unstoppable optimism, he believed that Member States could opt for change:

> "What the world is expecting from its leaders, especially from those at the helm of the most powerful Member States, is vision and compassion, determination and dedication. We have been talking so much and so often of the need for political will. The time to act and to show such political will is now; tomorrow may be too late." (*ibid., para. 42*)

Twenty-five years later those words have lost none of their significance.

Rüdiger von Wechmar was also a man of letters and a stylish writer, renowned for his ability in difficult diplomatic situations to break the ice with a good quotation and some proven words of wisdom. So, in conclusion, allow me to repeat a verse by an eighteenth-century theologist whom Rüdiger von Wechmar cherished and quoted in his concluding statement in 1981:

> "God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference between the two." (*ibid, para. 43*)

If we could take this piece of advice as guidance in our work at the United Nations today, that would probably be the most beautiful tribute to Rüdiger von Wechmar that he himself could have imagined.

Agenda item 87

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General (A/62/258)

Draft resolution (A/62/L.5)**

The Acting President: I invite Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International

Atomic Energy Agency, to introduce the report of the Agency for 2006.

Mr. ElBaradei (International Atomic Energy Agency): The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was created 50 years ago in an atmosphere charged with both concern and hope regarding the future of atomic science. The IAEA was entrusted with ensuring that nuclear energy would not become a cause for human destruction, but would be, rather, a vehicle for peace and prosperity.

If one were to recall our history since then, a number of milestones and trends would stand out: the rapid expansion of nuclear power in the 1960s and 1970s; the landmark Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1970 and the development of the comprehensive IAEA verification regime; the evolution of the Agency's technical assistance programme as a key vehicle for the transfer of nuclear science and technology to developing countries; and the development of international nuclear safety and security regimes.

Throughout its history, the IAEA has also faced a number of challenges and painful experiences necessitating change, adjustment and innovation: the 1986 accident at Chernobyl, the discovery of Iraq's clandestine nuclear weapons programme in the early 1990s or the nuclear security challenge revealed in the aftermath of 11 September 2001.

Today, I would like to discuss some of the Agency's current challenges and developments. But I believe it is worth recalling the ideals and objectives that have guided the Agency since its formation. They remain as relevant and meaningful today as they were to the founders of the IAEA.

I have spoken in recent years of rising expectations for nuclear power. But forecasting is always difficult. In my view, the role of the IAEA is not so much to predict the future as to do its utmost to plan and prepare for it.

What seems clear today is that there are three strong factors driving a renewed global interest in nuclear power: the steady growth in energy demand; the increasing concerns about energy security; and the challenge of climate change.

There are currently 439 nuclear power reactors in operation in 30 countries. These reactors supply just over 15 per cent of the world's electricity. To date, the use of nuclear power has been concentrated in industrialized countries. But in terms of new construction the pattern is different: half of the 30 reactors now being built are in developing countries.

In parallel with the increase in interest in nuclear power, the IAEA has experienced a sharp rise in requests for assistance with national energy studies. We are currently supporting studies in 77 Member States. Of these studies, 29 are exploring nuclear energy as a potential option. Algeria, Belarus, Egypt, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nigeria, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam and Yemen are among those considering introducing nuclear power programmes, or moving forward with the infrastructure needed. And many others, such as Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Finland, France, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, South Africa, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, are working to add new reactors to their existing programmes.

Technological and institutional innovation is naturally a key factor in ensuring the long-term sustainability of nuclear power. By "institutional innovation", I mean creative policy and infrastructure approaches. In some cases, a shared regional approach to nuclear power infrastructure, construction and operation may be feasible. A good example is the ongoing cooperation among the Baltic States on energy strategies, which now includes collaboration with Poland on plans to construct a nuclear power plant to help meet regional electricity demands.

On the technology innovation front, I should note that the Agency's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) is now considering collaborative projects on specific technological issues that need to be addressed for improved economics, safety, proliferation-resistance and other characteristics.

Given the fundamental importance of energy for development, it is important that we actively pursue the design and production of small and intermediate sized reactors. Successful production of safe and affordable reactors in this size range will be essential if nuclear power is to be a feasible option for countries and regions with small electrical grids.

The expected expansion in nuclear power will drive a corresponding increase in the need for countries to ensure a reliable supply of nuclear fuel. This could

also increase the potential proliferation risks created by the spread of sensitive nuclear technology, particularly if more countries decide to create independent uranium enrichment and plutonium separation facilities. These trends point clearly to the urgent need for the development of a new, multilateral framework for the nuclear fuel cycle, both the front and the back end.

With respect to the front end, some have proposed the creation of an actual or virtual reserve fuel bank of last resort, under IAEA auspices, for the assurance of supply of nuclear fuel. This bank would operate on the basis of apolitical and non-discriminatory non-proliferation criteria.

The Russian Federation proposes to convert a national facility into an international enrichment centre. Germany is proposing the construction of a new, multinational enrichment facility under IAEA control. The Agency has been examining these proposals and their associated legal, technical, financial and institutional aspects.

Controlling nuclear material is a complex process, yet if we fail to act, it could be the Achilles' heel of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In my view, an incremental approach is the way to move forward, beginning with the establishment of an equitable system for assurance of supply. The next step would seek to bring any new operations for uranium enrichment and plutonium separation under multinational control. Over time, these multinational controls would also be extended to existing facilities.

The Agency directs much of its scientific activity to peaceful nuclear applications related to health, agriculture, industry, water management and preservation of the environment. I will offer a few examples.

Since last September, we have increased the fundraising efforts of our Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT). Working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international partners, we have also begun to develop demonstration sites to enhance multidisciplinary cancer control capacity in Albania, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Yemen. As these projects mature, they will serve as a platform for raising awareness and for larger-scale regional fundraising.

For more than 40 years, the Agency has benefited from an active partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), through the Joint Division established in 1967. With persistent hunger affecting more than 820 million people in the world, efforts to enhance food security and safety and increase crop productivity have never been more relevant.

With thousands of new varieties of food crops released in dozens of countries over the past half century, plant breeding has been one of the real success stories of Atoms for Peace. For example, a recent regional project in Asia used plant breeding to develop more than 20 new food crop varieties. As one result, farmers in areas of Sri Lanka affected by the December 2004 tsunami are now growing a variety of green bean that is tolerant of saline soil, as well as being nutritious and giving higher yield.

The safety and security of nuclear activities around the globe remain key elements of the Agency's mandate. With the renewed interest in nuclear power generation, comparable attention and commitment must be given to ensuring the nuclear safety and security infrastructure that must go with it.

The primary responsibility for safety rests with the operator of a nuclear facility or the user of a nuclear technique, as well as with the national Government overseeing that operation or use. Technology can be transferred, but safety culture cannot; it must be learned and embedded. For those countries embarking on nuclear power programmes, it is essential that they become part of the global nuclear safety regime and share responsibility for its sustainability.

The strong, steady safety performance of recent years is reassuring. But complacency, an overemphasis on cost savings, the impulse to cover up problems or even falsification, are hazards against which both operators and regulators must constantly guard. The recurrence of events with these characteristics makes it clear that the promotion of a strong safety culture should always be viewed as "work in progress".

As the nuclear industry becomes increasingly international, IAEA Safety Standards are used as a reference point by an ever greater number of countries and serve as a benchmark for IAEA safety review services. Last year we began offering, for the first time, an Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS),

which combined previous services ranging from nuclear safety and radiation safety to emergency preparedness and nuclear security. IRRS missions have been conducted in France, Australia and Japan over the past year. This is contributing towards a more active exchange of knowledge among senior regulators, and promoting harmonized nuclear regulatory approaches worldwide.

The IAEA's nuclear security programme has maintained its rapid pace of programme delivery. Among other efforts over the past year, the Agency assisted in improving physical protection at facilities in a number of States, helping to fix weaknesses in security systems at those facilities. We have also been able to assist many countries to improve their border detection capability through training in detection techniques and the use of relevant instruments.

The international community has also taken on board a variety of international instruments relevant to nuclear security. The rapid entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism is a welcome step forward. However, progress on ratifying the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material remains slow. Of the 128 States parties, only 11 so far have accepted the amendment. I urge all States to adhere to the Convention and accept the amendment.

The Agency is seen as playing an important role in the implementation of these instruments. To that end, we have started an effort to provide nuclear security guidance that would facilitate implementation.

As these and other nuclear security efforts have expanded and matured in recent years, the IAEA has begun to transition away from ad hoc approaches to strengthening nuclear security and towards more normative, sustainable national and international approaches.

The nuclear non-proliferation and arms control regime continues to face a broad set of challenges. Effective verification must be supported by four essential elements: adequate legal authority, state-of-the-art technology, access to all relevant information, and sufficient human and financial resources.

It is now more than 10 years since the model additional protocol was approved by the Board of Governors. The additional protocol enhances the Agency's access to nuclear facilities and relevant information, enabling the IAEA to draw credible conclusions regarding not only the peaceful nature of a country's declared nuclear programme, but also the absence of undeclared nuclear facilities. But to date just over half of the 162 States with safeguards agreements have brought additional protocols into force. This is far from satisfactory progress. More than a hundred States have yet to conclude additional protocols, and 31 States parties to the NPT have not even brought into force their required comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency.

Without safeguards agreements, the Agency cannot provide any assurance about a State's nuclear activities. And without the additional protocol, the Agency cannot provide credible assurance regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material or activity. Therefore, I urge all States that have not done so to bring these instruments into force.

At the invitation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, an Agency team visited the country in June to work out agreed modalities for verification and monitoring by the IAEA of the shutdown and sealing of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. These modalities were implemented in subsequent visits. As of 17 July, we were able to verify shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. I welcome the return of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the verification process. I also welcome the active cooperation the IAEA team has received from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Agency looks forward to continuing to work with it as the verification process evolves.

Regarding the implementation of Agency safeguards in the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would make four brief points.

First, the Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran. Iran has continued to provide the access and reporting needed to enable Agency verification in this regard.

Secondly, Iran has recently provided the Agency with additional information and access needed to resolve a number of long outstanding issues, such as the scope and nature of past plutonium experiments.

Thirdly, contrary to the decisions of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter, calling on Iran to take certain confidence-building measures, Iran

has not suspended its enrichment-related activities and is continuing with its construction of the heavy water reactor at Arak. This is clearly regrettable.

Fourthly, the Agency so far has been unable to verify certain important aspects relevant to the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme. However, Iran and the secretariat agreed in August on a work plan for resolving all outstanding verification issues. These verification issues have been at the core of the lack of confidence about the nature of Iran's programme. Iran's agreement on such a work plan, with a defined timeline — in response to repeated requests by the Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors — is therefore an important step in the right direction.

But, naturally, Iran's active cooperation and full transparency are key in this regard. If the Agency were able to provide credible assurance about the peaceful nature of Iran's past and current nuclear programme, it would go a long way towards building confidence and could help create the conditions for a comprehensive and durable solution. Such a solution would assure — and should assure — the international community about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, while enabling Iran to make full use of nuclear technology for economic and social development. I intend to report on the implementation of the work plan to the Agency's Board of Governors meeting next month.

Fifty years ago, the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme was in its infancy. Most member States lacked basic nuclear capacities, and the programme therefore focused on building up nuclear expertise and helping give birth to the institutions and facilities that would support the safe introduction of nuclear technology.

Today, the picture has changed, due to the evolution of skills, infrastructure and needs in IAEA member States. Several member States are leaving behind their developing country status. The development of nuclear capacities and infrastructure in some regions has paved the way for South–South cooperation, stimulating an increase in regional self-sufficiency and an expansion in collective, specialized expertise.

Opportunities for cooperative ventures — such as shared multinational management of common underground water aquifers, transborder programmes for the elimination of insect pests and other causes of disease, and jointly owned and managed nuclear power plants — are coming to the drawing board, adding new significance to technical cooperation. These are clearly positive trends.

After prolonged discussions, the Board of Governors recommended in July a budget for 2008-2009. This process has once again highlighted the urgent need for adequate resources to ensure effective delivery of the IAEA programme as mandated by the Statute and as requested by its member States. The IAEA remains underfunded in many critical areas, a situation which, if it remains unaddressed, will lead to a steady erosion of our ability to perform key functions. This is not a sustainable approach to meeting the Agency's financial needs.

To remedy this untenable situation, I have tasked the secretariat with conducting a detailed review of the nature and scope of our programme in the next decade — in the light of our statutory obligations, decisions of the IAEA policy-making organs and foreseen high priority activities — and what resources would be needed to fund these activities.

We have given a name to this study — "20/20" — reflecting our effort to look ahead to 2020 with the clearest possible vision. I intend to set up a high-level panel of experts to review the report, including providing guidance on appropriate funding levels and mechanisms, before submitting the report to our Board of Governors. This will help to clarify expectations about the IAEA's mission in the coming years and how these expectations can be matched by the necessary financial and human resources in a predictable and assured manner. The Agency's critical missions in the fields of development, safety and security, and verification deserve no less.

Fifty years after the Atoms for Peace initiative, I believe the time has come to think of a new framework for the use of nuclear energy, a framework that accounts for both the lessons we have learned and the current reality.

This new framework should include swift and concrete action to achieve several things. The first is robust technological development and innovation in nuclear power and nuclear applications. Secondly, a new multinational framework for the fuel cycle is needed, both the front and the back ends, to assure supply and curb proliferation risk. Thirdly, there should be universal application of comprehensive safeguards

and the additional protocol as the standard for nuclear verification, to enable the Agency to provide assurance about declared activities as well as the absence of undeclared activities. Fourthly, the linkage between non-proliferation and disarmament should be recognized. From that arises the need for concrete and rapid progress towards nuclear disarmament through deep cuts in existing arsenals, downgrading of alert levels for deployed nuclear weapons and the resuscitation of multilateral disarmament efforts, starting with bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and beginning negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Fifthly, a robust international security regime is needed in the light of the diverse threats we face, as is, sixthly, an effective and universal nuclear safety regime, a cornerstone for any expansion in the use of nuclear power. Seventh, there must be sufficient funding for the Agency to meet its increasing responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner.

At the beginning of this statement, I highlighted some of the challenges and achievements that stand out from a review of the Agency's history. I believe that it is when we view the history of the Agency in its totality that we can really understand the concept of Atoms for Peace. Our mission is critical in both good times and bad. Our professionalism, impartiality and independence are vital, both publicly and behind the scenes.

As I said in Oslo a couple of years ago, when we were honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize, another landmark in our history, "a durable peace is not a single achievement, but an environment, a process and a commitment". It is with this understanding that we look to the future.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile to introduce draft resolution A/62/L.5.

Mr. Skoknic (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): As Chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), I thank the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for the introduction of the annual report of the work of the Agency for 2006 and the important additional information he has given us this morning on the Agency's main activities during the period covered.

The Director General's succinct statement gave us a comprehensive overview of the diverse challenges faced in carrying out the functions and responsibilities entrusted to the Agency, as well as its limited resources. I would add that the Board of Governors works very closely with the Director General and his efficient and professional secretariat to define priorities and rationalize its work.

On behalf of the delegation of Chile, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/62/L.5 on the annual report of the IAEA, in a version dated 26 October that contains technical corrections. I shall refer to the technical corrections at the end of my statement.

The draft resolution enjoys the support of nearly 90 delegations, which I will not mention individually, in order not to unduly lengthen my statement. They are listed in documents A/62/L.5 and A/62/L.5/Add.1. We thank all the sponsors for their support for the draft resolution. The list of sponsors is still open.

The draft resolution reflects the broad consensus among the member States of the Agency. That consensus was reaffirmed during both the consultations held at Headquarters in Vienna and at the various consultation forums here in New York. I should add that there was a general understanding during the Vienna consultations that the draft resolution would be neither amended nor renegotiated in New York.

The draft resolution is a very simple and brief factual text based on the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its previous session. It takes note of the annual report of the Agency and of the resolutions adopted by the IAEA's General Conference, held in Vienna between 17 and 21 September.

In addition, the draft resolution reaffirms strong support for the indispensable role of the Agency in encouraging the development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, in technology transfer to developing countries and in nuclear safety, verification and security.

The brief draft resolution concludes with an appeal to Member States to continue to support the work of the Agency.

The technical corrections were made in order to make the draft resolution before the Assembly today identical to that adopted in Vienna. They include minor details, such as the inclusion of the proper acronym for the IAEA in English and the word "Agency" in some paragraphs, as well as a specific reference to the dates

of the fifty-first session of the General Conference, namely, 17 to 21 September 2007.

The large number of sponsors and the positive dialogue that has taken place with various delegations makes me hopeful that the draft resolution will be adopted without the need for a vote.

Mr. de Lemos Godinho (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The EU commends the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, its Director General, for the excellent work done by the Agency during the past year. We also thank the Director General for his report on the IAEA's activities in 2006.

The member States of the EU welcome the outcome of the fifty-first IAEA General Conference, held in Vienna between 17 and 21 September 2007, including the resolutions and decisions adopted.

As in the past, the European Union is a co-sponsor of the draft resolution on the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The European Union fully supports its contents. With over 75 co-sponsors, the draft resolution reflects broad agreement among the IAEA's member States. We sincerely commend the efforts of the Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors and hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The three pillars of the Agency's Statute — verification, safety and nuclear applications — are more valid than ever today as nuclear threats increase all over the world. The European Union is therefore profoundly committed to the contents of the pillars, as they are responsible for a major contribution to promoting peace and security in the world.

The European Union reaffirms its full support for the work of the Agency in pursuing the objectives of peaceful nuclear cooperation and nuclear safety. Furthermore, we recognize its indispensable global role in nuclear verification.

With regard to nuclear security in particular, we wish to refer to the Agency's Nuclear Security Fund, which the European Union continues to support. We call on all States to commit themselves to financing of the Fund.

The Agency's comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocols constitute the current Agency verification standard. The European Union regards them as prerequisites to an effective and credible safeguards system.

The European Union is working towards making the additional protocols a condition for the supply of nuclear exports. All European Union member States have had additional protocols in force since May 2004. We urge all States that have not yet done so to sign an additional protocol without further delay. We also urge all States that have signed but not yet brought into force their respective safeguards agreements and additional protocols to do so without further delay, as both strengthen the international non-proliferation regime, contribute to the security of all States and increase the confidence necessary for international cooperation in the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Through our joint action under the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, we support the Agency's activities in nuclear security, verification and the strengthening of national legislative and regulatory infrastructures for the implementation of international instruments in the areas of nuclear security and control of nuclear and other radioactive materials.

Increasing the capabilities of States to detect and respond to illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials is another major field of cooperation between the European Union and the Agency.

The safety and security of radioactive sources and the role of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Agency's General Conference in 2003 are of the utmost importance. The European Union is therefore committed to following the Code, in accordance with the European Directive on the control of highly radioactive sealed sources and orphan sources. The European Union urges all countries to declare their political commitment to the Code and to implement the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources.

The Agency continues to be of critical importance to the global fight against nuclear terrorism and the spread of nuclear weapons. That is another reason why all Agency members greatly value its impartial expertise.

The European Union regrets that more than a hundred States have yet to sign and bring into force additional protocols. We urge those States to do so without delay.

Just last July, the Agency officially turned 50 years of age. As was underlined at the time, the Agency has contributed decisively to diminishing all the risks associated with nuclear activities related both to civil security issues and the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The European Union takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the Agency for the benefits its work have brought for a more peaceful and safer world.

The European Union reiterates its full support for the Agency. It is pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution on this year's report of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to make this statement on behalf of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and its associated States: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Let me first congratulate Mr. Kerim on his election as President of the General Assembly and convey to him the support of the countries to which I have just referred as he conducts his work.

MERCOSUR and its associated States would also like to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his presence here today and his introduction of the Agency's annual report on its work. MERCOSUR and its associated States would also like to express their gratitude for the presence of Ambassador Milenko Skoknic of Chile, who introduced draft resolution A/62/L.5, "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", in his capacity as Chairman of the IAEA Board of Governors.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, which is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, has become a key multilateral forum in the area of promoting activities for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Our countries value highly their relationships with the Agency. We congratulate the Director General on the professionalism and impartiality with which he carries out his great responsibilities.

It is important to maintain a balance between the Agency's three main pillars: technology transfer, safety and verification.

MERCOSUR and its associated States would like to emphasize the need for all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to strictly adhere to the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that regard, we reiterate the inalienable right of States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with international commitments and in line with article IV of the NPT.

I also emphasize that any attempt to redefine the delicate balance between Treaty rights and obligations that puts into question the legitimacy of the aspirations of States to the technological development of nuclear energy for solely peaceful purposes can contribute to undermining the system established by the Treaty, which enjoys widespread acceptance.

We note with interest the debate regarding initiatives to multilateralize the fuel cycle.

MERCOSUR and its associated States express their full support for the authority of the IAEA as the competent body to verify compliance with the obligations entered into under the safeguards agreements of respective member States.

We welcome the new member States of the IAEA: the Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Nepal, Bahrain and Cape Verde. We also congratulate Ecuador on having been elected a member of the IAEA's Board of Governors.

We would also emphasize the value we attach to international cooperation and technical assistance at the multilateral level through active participation and collaboration with the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme and the Regional Co-operative Agreement for the Advancement of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean, which has been chaired by Venezuela since last September.

We are also pleased to acknowledge efforts by the Agency and member States to strengthen international

cooperation in nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management. In particular, we would like to highlight the progress made in the various activities aimed at maintaining and enhancing security — for example, those relating to information and communications networks for radiation and nuclear safety — as well as those intended to strengthen national regulatory infrastructure for the control of radioactive sources.

We also recognize the efforts of the IAEA's secretariat and member States in the areas of education and training on radiation and nuclear safety.

We would also like to point to the effectiveness of the verification system implemented by the IAEA as a mechanism to reassure the international community about the peaceful purposes of nuclear programmes. Nevertheless, we believe that, with the assistance of member States, efforts must continue to put in place greater efficiencies in the implementation of safeguards.

Allow me to refer in particular to the Common System for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials used by the Argentine-Brazil Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), as well as the valuable cooperation between ABACC and the IAEA.

We also wish to emphasize the IAEA's positive outcomes in achieving its goal of facilitating the use of nuclear science to sustainably address the socio-economic needs of member States through the safe use of nuclear energy, including with regard to food production, human health, water resources management, environmental protection and industrial applications.

Faced with new medium-term projections of a substantial expansion in the use of nuclear power, and aware that access to adequate and reliable sources of energy is essential for development, our countries recognize the invaluable support that the Agency can continue to give member States that are exploring the possibility of introducing or expanding their use of nuclear energy.

We also agree with the Agency's assessment that scientific and technological research should focus on new reactor designs of varying power that are more efficient and more widely available, can be built more quickly and require lower capital investment.

With regard to the management of spent fuel and waste, we believe that the management and disposal of this long-term fuel remains a challenge in view of the rising expectations of nuclear power and rising inventories of spent fuel. We appreciate the efforts that the secretariat continues to make on options for the final geological disposal of high-activity waste, long-term waste or spent fuel.

We also acknowledge the work done by the IAEA in the area of safety and security of nuclear materials and installations. Additionally, we welcome the improvement it has made in regard to the safety of nuclear installations and the safe maintenance of nuclear materials.

We would like to draw attention to the September 2006 publication of "Fundamental Safety Principles", a set of 10 new principles which consolidate and replace the previous publication on the subject and constitute the basis of requirements for the safety of nuclear installations as well as action to be taken to protect people and the environment from exposure to ionizing radiation.

Finally, let me express our support for the IAEA's efforts against nuclear and radiological terrorism, and our support for its activities aimed at promoting the universal application of international legal instruments relating to the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities and radioactive sources.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group.

We thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. ElBaradei, for presenting its report for 2006 and for the update on developments in 2007. We also commend the IAEA for the efficient discharge of its mandate.

The growing interest of Member States in nuclear energy as a source of electricity heightens the responsibility of the IAEA, which should support the process of strengthening developing countries' use of nuclear energy to meet their needs while mitigating the environmental impact of increased energy production and consumption.

We welcome measures taken to ensure the reliability of nuclear power plants around the world, especially of previously shut-down reactors, and plant-life management for long-term operation. We urge all Member States performing reliability assessment

procedures to fully involve the IAEA in order to ensure that the highest standards of safety and security are observed. We welcome the extension of assistance offered by the Integrated Regulatory Review Service.

The decommissioning of nuclear facilities should be carried out in full awareness of the threats facing humankind, especially nuclear terrorism. We commend the assistance offered to member States for the evaluation and decommissioning of former nuclear facilities and also for cleaning up sites of dismantled nuclear power plants. We rely fully on the IAEA for steps to harmonize safety standards and strengthen regulatory infrastructure. We are pleased to note that the IAEA is making efforts to identify — and appropriately respond to — key challenges in this field.

The growing interest in nuclear energy as a source of electricity increases the importance of efforts to develop innovative technologies for nuclear power generation. In this respect, we welcome the upgrading of the IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles to its Phase-II, aimed at ensuring improved economy and safety, with a special focus on the development of small and intermediate-sized reactors that are safe and affordable. Africa has made a significant contribution to these efforts. In this context, we commend South Africa for the development of the 165 megawatt pebble bed modular reactor.

We urge the IAEA to enhance its research and development activities in order to find reliable solutions to the problems of the management of spent fuel and high- level waste in order to preserve the life cycle on earth. In the same vein, we welcome various proposals aimed at establishing reliable supply sources of nuclear fuel, including that concerning the creation, under the auspices of the IAEA, of a real or virtual fuel bank that would operate on the basis of apolitical and non-discriminatory non-proliferation criteria. We encourage the Agency to take the lead in developing credible international supply options to induce member States to build mutual trust in this area.

Such endeavours increase transparency and completely depoliticize the supply of nuclear fuel for peaceful use. They also secure the inalienable rights of developing countries, in keeping with agreed nuclear non-proliferation norms. We support the incremental approach, with multiple assurances in place, recommended by the Director General, and welcome the establishment of the International Steering Committee on Denials of Shipments of Radioactive Materials to ensure that decisions made in this area are scrutinized, to the benefit of all parties involved.

We note with great interest the Agency's activities as regards the development and sharing of other peaceful applications of nuclear energy, especially in the fields of medicine, food supply and agriculture, pest-control and water resource management. We encourage the Agency to step up its efforts to mobilize resources to enable the broad dissemination of knowledge about available applications. We thank the generous donors who contributed to the increase registered in the resources mobilized for this purpose in 2007.

Notwithstanding the efforts made to enhance the safety and security of nuclear energy activities, incidents and emergencies cannot yet be totally excluded. The IAEA has carried out various measures to enhance preparedness, as well as early and adequate responses. We urge Member States to fully support the steps it has taken. In this respect, we call for the universality of the international legal instruments on nuclear safety and security.

We welcome the wide variety of technical cooperation activities developed by the Agency, particularly the adoption by the Commission on Safety Standards of a roadmap for updating the transport regulations, and publishing a new edition in 2009, and the inter-agency cooperation to this end.

The African Group attaches great importance to initiatives by the Agency to assist member States to improve their radiation detection capabilities with handheld and fixed instruments. Such assistance should be extended to African countries in the framework of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

As regards verification activities, the Agency has fully demonstrated that it is the sole international authority on which the international community can rely for assurances regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear materials. We call on all States that are developing nuclear activities to conclude with the Agency comprehensive safeguards agreements in order to bring about the universalization of the safeguards system. We encourage all States to conclude additional protocols and to cooperate fully with the Agency for their implementation.

The African Group welcomes the efforts made by the Agency to promote such cooperation. We rely on it to pursue implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action that African Energy Ministers adopted at the ministerial Conference held in Algiers on 9 and 10 January 2007. The Ministers pledged in the Declaration to promote and enhance nuclear safety and security within a global approach aiming at accountable use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in full compliance with the non-proliferation norms.

Finally, the African Group stresses the need for a cooperative approach to the settlement of international disputes related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and welcomes recent progress with regard to current cases under consideration. We welcome the prospect of the return of IAEA personnel to conduct monitoring and verification in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as agreed between the Agency and that country.

We call for the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and for the full cooperation of all parties concerned for the peaceful settlement of all pending issues in this regard.

In conclusion, the African Group reaffirms its full support for the Director General of the IAEA and the endorsement by African States of the Agency's indispensable role in assisting developing countries, particularly African States, in the peaceful practical application of atomic energy and the acquisition of related technologies.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are glad to welcome the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. ElBaradei, and to thank him for presenting the Agency's annual report.

Russia was one of the founders of the IAEA and has always actively supported its work. Over the half-century of its existence, the Agency has become a prominent and influential organization. Today it enjoys well-deserved authority and seeks to ensure that nuclear energy is used in the safest possible way, and exclusively for peaceful purposes. Its activities are marked by a high degree of professionalism and lack of political opportunism. We are sure that during this age of renaissance of nuclear energy the IAEA's role and importance will grow. We commend the efforts of Mr. ElBaradei, to whom the Agency largely owes its success.

The IAEA is a unique international body with the authority to assess compliance by States with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We favour further development of its verification mechanism and its oversight activities. Special attention must continue to be given to universalization of the additional protocol to the Safeguards Agreement as an essential instrument for increasing the efficiency of the IAEA safeguards activities to verify compliance by States with their NPT obligations.

On 3 October this year the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin, signed a federal law entitled "On the Ratification of the Additional Protocol between the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency to the Agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the International Atomic Energy Agency on the Application of Safeguards in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics". The law was adopted by the State Duma on 14 September and approved by the Council of the Federation on 19 September.

Ratification of the additional protocol is a practical contribution by Russia to strengthening the IAEA's verification capabilities as regards compliance by the NPT States parties with their non-proliferation obligations. The additional protocol to the agreement on IAEA safeguards is an effective measure to ensure confidence by the international community in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and in timely identification of undeclared nuclear activities. We regard its universalization as one of the important areas of non-proliferation activities.

Russia has given, and will continue to give, assistance in strengthening the IAEA safeguards system, which is 25 years old this year. Means of providing that assistance include its national programme of scientific and technological support for the safeguards.

The threat that weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) may fall into the hands of terrorists increases the urgency of effective international efforts in the field of non-proliferation. The inhumanity of terrorist acts, including those in Russia, shows the need for reliable safeguards to prevent terrorists gaining access to WMDs, mainly through consolidation of joint

actions to create a global system to address new challenges and threats — in particular, in the nuclear field.

In this regard, we note the development of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, put forward by the Presidents of Russia and the United States, which has already been subscribed to by 62 States. It primarily seeks to mobilize the efforts of States to fulfil their obligations under the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We believe that implementation of the Initiative is significantly strengthening and expanding the work done by the IAEA, which has observer status to the Initiative.

We are pleased with the expansion of interaction between the IAEA and the Security Council Committee established by the Council's resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of WMDs.

This year the IAEA has given significant attention to developing its efforts to ensure compliance with non-proliferation norms. In the nuclear field, this means the development of practical measures to ensure access to the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for countries that faithfully comply with their commitments.

The initiative by the Russian President, Mr. Putin, to develop a global nuclear energy infrastructure, with the creation of international centres providing nuclear fuel cycle services, is designed to carry out that task. It envisages creating international centres to provide nuclear fuel cycle services. As a first step, Russia has established in Angarsk an international uranium enrichment centre. It will give States the possibility of guaranteed access to uranium enrichment capacities to meet their nuclear fuel requirements, without the need to set up their own nuclear fuel cycles. Founded by Russia and Kazakhstan, the centre is open for the participation of third parties, without any political conditions. It is now completing the IAEA safeguards compliance procedures.

We also support other initiatives aimed at resolving the issue of large-scale development of nuclear energy based on international cooperation. The United States-Russia Declaration on Nuclear Energy and Non-proliferation Joint Actions, adopted on 3 July this year, aims at merging those initiatives to establish a new format for international interaction in nuclear energy development. All interested States — those that have the nuclear fuel cycle and nuclear technologies and those that only plan to use nuclear energy — can take part in that work.

The IAEA plays an important role in the development of innovative nuclear technologies in support of the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) implemented in the framework of the Russian President's initiative on energy support for the sustainable development of humankind, a very important step in solving problems of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the earth's environmental recovery.

We commend the progress made in recent years in regard to nuclear safety. With active IAEA participation, it has become possible to achieve great success in increasing the safety of nuclear power plant operation and the handling of radioactive materials, sources and wastes.

We support IAEA activities in the area of technical cooperation with and assistance to the developing countries.

I should also like to mention certain prominent aspects of the activities of the IAEA.

Complex problems call for comprehensive approaches. That is true of the situation around the Iranian nuclear programme. We are pleased with the cooperation that has begun between Iran and the IAEA to resolve the outstanding issues. Agreeing and implementing the work plan between the Agency and Tehran is a step in the right direction. The search for a comprehensive political and diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear programme must continue, and the emerging positive trends must be bolstered. There is no alternative to the peaceful resolution of this problem.

A graphic example of that is the situation around the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. On the whole, we assess positively the work done in the format of the Six-Party Talks to resolve the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula. The first stage of denuclearization has been accomplished successfully. Concrete steps must now be taken to implement the second stage.

I reaffirm our support for the draft resolution on the IAEA report. As a sponsor of the draft resolution, Russia fully believes in the importance of the Agency's

work, and is sure that it will be continued, in the interest of strengthening international security.

Mr. Cheng Jingye (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, the Chinese delegation expresses its sincere thanks to Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his detailed report on the work of the IAEA during the past year.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the IAEA. Over the past half century, it has had remarkable achievements in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The international community greatly appreciates its work and achievements. On behalf of the Chinese delegation, I extend my congratulations to the IAEA. As it always has, China will support the IAEA in playing a greater role in the promotion in a balanced manner of the two major objectives to which I have referred.

We are pleased to note that the IAEA made much progress in technical cooperation in 2006, when there was a clear increase over the previous year in new technical cooperation resources, the rate of attainment and the rate of programme implementation. Technical cooperation programmes have made a positive contribution to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by member States. We hope that the IAEA will make more inputs and spur member States to attach greater importance to technical cooperation.

China maintains comprehensive cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the IAEA and member States. China actively supports and participates in technical cooperation programmes under the aegis of the IAEA. In 2006, China carried out 26 national technical cooperation projects and 50 regional and transregional projects in nuclear power generation, nuclear physics, nuclear chemistry and nuclear engineering technologies.

China has always supported and taken part in IAEA activities to enhance nuclear security and safety. In 2006 China began participation in the IAEA's Illicit Trafficking Database, relating to nuclear and other radioactive materials. We also established in Beijing the Joint Training Centre on Nuclear Safeguards and Security, which will not only train experts on nuclear security and safeguards for China, but will also provide relevant services to other member States in the region.

China has also made specific arrangements with the IAEA on nuclear security cooperation. The two sides will cooperate on nuclear security at major public events, including the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

With regard to nuclear non-proliferation, China supports the IAEA's unremitting efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system. It is our hope that the IAEA will further improve and strengthen the universality and effectiveness of the additional protocol system.

The IAEA has also played an important role in resolving regional nuclear issues. In addition to conducting monitoring and verification on the shutting down and sealing of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it has made progress with Iran in clarifying outstanding issues concerning that country's nuclear programme. China appreciates the IAEA's objective and just positions in addressing relevant issues, and supports the Agency in continuing its efforts.

China takes this opportunity to reaffirm its support for preservation of the international nuclear non-proliferation regimes, as well as its opposition to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We believe that regional nuclear issues should be resolved peacefully through diplomatic negotiations on the basis of dialogue and consultation on an equal footing, so as to maintain global and regional security and stability. Together with other parties concerned, China will continue to play a constructive role in the resolution of such issues.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): This debate is taking place at a special time. We are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which deserves our recognition for its important role on the international scene.

Cuba is proud of being a founding member of the IAEA. We will continue to fully support its work.

The world is in the midst of an unprecedented energy crisis. We must take urgent action. Oil prices are rising daily, having reached levels unimaginable just a few years ago. Today there is a greater need than ever for feasible alternatives and sustainable sources of energy. In that regard, Cuba commends the efforts made in the framework of the IAEA for capacity-

building and increasing awareness of electricity generation by nuclear power.

We reject any attempt to use the supply of nuclear fuel as a means of political or economic coercion, or as a way to establish a monopoly over its distribution by a few countries.

Cuba attaches special importance to cooperation between developing countries. We reiterate our support for the Regional Co-operative Agreement for the Advancement of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL) as a key mechanism to foster cooperation in matters of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes among the countries of Latin American and the Caribbean.

The results of implementation of the action plan for the strategic alliance between ARCAL and the IAEA are remarkable, as is its first specific outcome, elaboration of the regional strategic framework for Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuba also participates actively in the coordinated research programmes, whose importance and effectiveness are unquestionable.

We acknowledge the IAEA's efforts to strengthen infrastructure to address radiological emergencies. Cuba will continue to contribute to that objective with experts and in other ways.

This year we celebrate the seventeenth anniversary of the Cuban health programme to provide treatment to children from the areas affected by the Chernobyl accident. Under this programme, 23,000 patients — mainly from the Ukraine, Russia and Belarus — have been treated in our country. We reiterate Cuba's readiness to continue sharing our specialists' vast expertise acquired through this programme.

The criminal and illegal economic, commercial and financial blockade that the United States Government has imposed on Cuba for the last 47 years directly affects the technical cooperation that the IAEA provides to Cuba. The blockade significantly impedes our country's purchase of equipment and reagents. Last year there were several new cases of United States companies, or companies from other countries but with some United States capital, refusing to sell to the IAEA equipment bound for Cuba. Likewise, the United States authorities denied visas to Cuban specialists to prevent their participation in important IAEA technical meetings held on United States territory.

Cuba reiterates its categorical rejection of political manipulation of IAEA technical cooperation. Such manipulation is contrary to the Agency's Statute.

The inalienable right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, without discrimination and in accordance with their respective legal obligations, must be strictly respected.

Attempts by some to prejudge the peaceful or non-peaceful nature of certain countries' nuclear programmes are unacceptable. The IAEA is the only authority competent to verify the fulfilment of obligations incurred under the respective safeguards agreements of member States. No State, no matter how powerful, can usurp this mandate. There must be no pressure of any sort or wrongful interference in the Agency's working methods that may compromise its efficiency and credibility.

Cuba welcomes the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IAEA's secretariat to settle outstanding issues. We commend and support the work plan agreed by the two parties. The intensive talks that led to its adoption prove the willingness of both parties to advance constructively towards a rational solution.

Some States furiously hastened to disqualify the text of the agreement, even before it was published, in a clear challenge to the favourable opinion of the majority of the international community. We reiterate our opposition to any attempt to make the resolution of this issue — or any negotiation — contingent on Iran's unilateral suspension of its nuclear fuel cycle activities. That is discriminatory and illegal, and it violates the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the Charter. Only unconditional dialogue, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, will lead to a resolution of this matter.

Moreover, we reiterate our support for the Six-Party Talks to find a long-term solution to the Korean nuclear question through diplomacy and dialogue. In this regard, Cuba welcomes the agreements for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, in whose implementation the IAEA has a key role.

Despite the proclaimed end of the cold war, there are 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world, more than 12,000 of which are ready for immediate use. Nuclear-weapon modernization programmes have not stopped.

The mere existence of nuclear weapons and the doctrines prescribing their possession and use are a serious threat to international peace and security.

Cuba rejects the selective application of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Questions related to nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot continue to be relegated to the background, while horizontal non-proliferation is favoured. Nuclear disarmament is, and should continue to be, the highest disarmament priority.

I conclude by reiterating Cuba's full support for the IAEA's important work in promoting the peaceful, safe use of nuclear energy.

Mr. Al-Murad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today the General Assembly is discussing an important agenda item closely linked with principle on which the United Nations was founded — the maintenance of international peace and security.

Having reviewed the annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the State of Kuwait wishes to convey its sincerest appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, and all its staff for their efforts. We thank them for their tireless work to achieve the objectives and aspirations of the world's peoples and States by strengthening the principle of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the positive benefit of humanity.

We also congratulate the permanent representative of Chile to the Agency, Mr. Milenko Skoknic, on his election as Chairman of its Board of Governors, and we thank him for submitting the draft resolution on the Agency's 2006 report. My country is a sponsor of the draft resolution.

Since acceding to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on 15 August 1986, the State of Kuwait has concentrated its cooperation with the Agency's Department of Technical Cooperation on implementation of a set of projects dealing with building its own capacities and establishing special laboratories to measure the level of radioactive isotopes found in Kuwait's water and soil.

Convinced of the importance of preparing national qualified cadres in the prevention of nuclear radioactivity and the safe handling of radioactive materials, my country took the initiative during the past three years to host regional workshops, in cooperation with the IAEA. We are also eager to continue sending trainees to participate in training courses held at the Agency's headquarters.

Through its nuclear technology programme, the Agency is playing a key role in the exchange and transfer of nuclear information and know-how to member States, especially to developing countries. The programme aims to facilitate the use of nuclear science and related technologies and to sustainably meet the economic and social needs of member States through the safe use of nuclear power in the fields of energy, food production, human health care, water resources management, environmental protection, industrial applications and nuclear medicine.

The efforts of the Agency under the three pillars of its mandate — technology, safety and verification — constitute the foundation to guarantee nuclear technology's contribution to the promotion of peace, health and prosperity. In that context, we endorse the contents of the Agency's annual report for 2006, transmitted by the note of the Secretary-General(A/62/258), with regard to the application of nuclear science and technology to treat cancer.

The Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) seeks to assist developing countries to incorporate radiation treatment within the wider framework of preventing and combating cancer. In 2006 it helped to raise awareness about the rampant spread of cancer in the developing world and the need for comprehensive and multi-specialized planning to combat it. We commend the efforts to raise funds for PACT, including the number of scholarships, donations and material and in-kind contributions that have been secured. We acknowledge the contribution of the Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, in which Kuwait participates actively, contributing $500,000 to PACT.

There is no doubt that in playing the vital role of preventing the use of nuclear power for military purposes, and promoting its safest possible use for peaceful purposes, the IAEA cannot achieve its goals without concerted efforts by all States. We note with increased regret that calls by the Agency on some countries carrying out advanced nuclear activities to adhere to the NPT and implement the IAEA's safeguards regime are going unheeded. That has an adverse effect on international peace and security.

In that context, the Middle East region will never achieve its goal of peace and stability as long as Israel

remains the only country in the region that refuses to subject its facilities to the IAEA's safeguards regime. That is a major obstacle to achieving the universality of the NPT, one that greatly disrupts the effort to strengthen the NPT regime. The continuation of that irregular situation could be an incentive to other States of the region to attempt to acquire or build nuclear weapons on the pretext of the Agency's overlooking, or being lax in dealing with, countries that refuse to open their installations to inspection.

Israel's intransigence in refusing to cooperate with the IAEA could lead to more anxiety and tensions in the Middle East region and undermine the ongoing calls by other States regarding the need to free the Middle East, including the Gulf region, from all weapons of mass destruction, while acknowledging the right of States of the region to acquire the necessary experience in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Such knowledge must be made available to all within the framework of relevant international conventions.

In that regard, I note that the Supreme Council of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council has recommended a joint study by its member countries to create a joint programme in the field of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, in accordance with international standards and regimes.

With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, on the basis of our belief in the need to respect international legitimacy and the principle of resolving conflicts by peaceful means, the State of Kuwait calls upon the international community to join its efforts and continue to work to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, thereby sparing the Gulf region any crisis that can disrupt security and stability.

We welcome the recent agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IAEA as an important step in dispelling fears and doubts with regard to Iran's nuclear programme. We hope that dialogue and cooperation will continue in a transparent manner until all international issues and concerns are addressed. We also hope that sufficient time will be accorded to diplomacy, so as to ensure that a peaceful solution can be implemented with flexibility, wisdom and responsibility on all sides. We hope for a successful outcome of the discussions currently taking place in Tehran between Iranian officials and a delegation from the IAEA.

In concluding, I express my country's hope that the international community will continue to support the work of the IAEA to ensure the complete and non-selective implementation of all international agreements pertaining to disarmament, including the NPT and its three main pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chávez Basagoitia (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Peru expresses its gratitude for the presence of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and for his presentation of the annual report on the Agency's work.

We also thank Ambassador Milenko Skoknic of Chile for his introduction of the draft resolution "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency" in his capacity as Chairperson of the IAEA's Board of Governors.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Common Market of the South and its associated States.

Peru is firmly committed to all efforts to achieve comprehensive disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their delivery systems, which pose a threat to international peace and security. With regard to the effort to establish a robust and credible international regime, we would refer to our participation in the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which countries of our region have signed and ratified. The spirit of that Treaty has inspired other regions, and should continue to guide them in achieving their objectives of peace and security.

Peru also participates in the Andean Zone of Peace and the South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation initiatives, which the General Assembly has supported on various occasions.

We are aware of the danger that nuclear proliferation poses to the international regime. We therefore attach the utmost importance to strengthening all aspects of the regime, and will continue to contribute to that effort. In that regard, we reiterate our concern about the current stalemate in disarmament negotiations. We also reiterate our call for joint

progress towards the fulfilment of international commitments.

With regard to nuclear energy, the international community has seen how the intergovernmental organization Atoms for Peace, created in 1957, has become the global centre of nuclear cooperation and how the IAEA is currently the principal instrument that the international community relies upon to prevent the proliferation of nuclear arms and to counter new threats of nuclear terrorism.

Peru, as a founding member of the IAEA, has actively contributed to its objectives, principally in the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in the regulation of its use through adequate safety measures, and in the application of verification, safeguards and physical protection.

Peru would like to point out the support that the IAEA offers in its work to foster the development and practical application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to offer assistance in the transfer of technology to developing countries. My country benefits from this important technical cooperation with the IAEA, through the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy and other related institutions.

As a sign of its commitment to the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the international regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Peru, signed, in 1999, the additional protocol to the IAEA safeguards agreements, as a contribution to the objectives of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. As a result, in 2006, Peru applied integrated safeguards.

Peru believes that the role of the IAEA can be strengthened so that it may serve as the main conduit for the transfer of nuclear technology, with a view to increasing cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. New challenges and realities make it necessary to review the role that the IAEA should play in the future in the areas of physical safety of nuclear waste, the illicit trafficking of nuclear material and verification in nuclear-free zones.

In this regard, Peru supports actions within the United Nations to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by State and non-State actors.

It also aims to see the implementation of the mechanisms adopted in existing international instruments, such as the NPT, as well as international disarmament commitments. We encourage transparency in nuclear matters and confidence-building measures to this end.

Specifically, Peru continues to favour dialogue and negotiation to ensure compliance with Security Council resolutions and commitments to the IAEA. Peru is therefore pleased with progress on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and welcomes that country's return to the IAEA verification process. My country hopes that this process will continue and deepen.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and a necessary step to achieve the ultimate goal of general and complete nuclear disarmament. In this context, even though Peru recognizes the right of any State to develop the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, we believe that that must be conditional on strict compliance with non-proliferation commitments and implementation of the IAEA safeguards regime, which complements and strengthens the international verification system. In this respect, we look forward to the report of the Director General on Iran's extension, transparency and cooperation in resolving outstanding verification matters.

The current global situation demands strengthening the credibility of the international regime for disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. To this end, we must enhance the role of the IAEA, both in its control and verification capacities and in its remaining responsibilities. Making better use of this tool will allow us to achieve the exclusively peaceful purposes of nuclear energy and avoid the spectre of proliferation by States or terrorist groups becoming a reality.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank Mr. ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his valuable presentation of the report on the Agency's activities in various areas. This confirms the competence of the IAEA in performing its lofty mandate in achieving a balanced interest in the three main areas of its work: technology, safety and verification.

We add our voice to the statement by the representative of Benin on behalf of the African Group.

Five decades ago Egypt participated in the establishment of the IAEA, convinced of the Agency's role in the strengthening of international peace and promoting the responsible use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, thus serving development ambitions and responding to international needs in a wide range of areas.

Furthermore, the comprehensive safeguards regime applied by the IAEA in non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has become one of the most central international verification systems employed in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, that system remains far from universal, especially in the region of the Middle East, where all States except Israel have joined the safeguards regime, pointing to an ever more urgent need for intensified international efforts aimed at the application of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime in all States of the region, without exception.

Egypt is firmly convinced that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East will contribute to confidence-building and the achievement of comprehensive peace in the countries of the region. There is no doubt that the lack of stability due to the presence of nuclear facilities outside the comprehensive safeguards regime demands a more effective response, as this situation threatens to trigger an arms race that would endanger the security and stability of the entire region. This is particularly true given statements made to the media on Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons, an acquisition to which the international community has not yet effectively responded.

The right of non-nuclear-weapon States to acquire and employ peaceful applications of nuclear technologies is indeed inalienable, as clearly anchored in article IV of the NPT. At a time when the need of developing countries for clean and economical energy is growing rapidly, the importance of this right becomes more evident and more closely associated with the realization of development plans and the enhancement of economic and social standards of peoples, while contributing to the achievement of international peace and security. Egypt therefore believes that the IAEA indeed has a growing role in supporting sustainable development efforts and effectively contributing to the acquisition of nuclear power and the satisfaction of the growing nuclear power needs of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT.

The importance of the role of the IAEA is growing, in light of the shortcomings, both qualitatively and quantitatively, affirmed by the international community regarding the transfer of nuclear technology from developed to less developed countries. It is regrettable that, instead of international cooperation being strengthened to address this imbalance, we see attempts to impose more unjustified restrictions and preconditions regarding the nuclear technology and materials required to develop peaceful nuclear programmes in non-nuclear-weapon countries.

These attempts have gone so far as to work towards producing reinterpretations of article IV of the NPT, reinterpretations that have nothing to do with the letter or spirit of the treaty and will only lead to further mistrust among its parties and add new, unhelpful challenges to the credibility and effectiveness of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime.

Although non-nuclear-weapon States have given up the military nuclear option and have temporarily accepted a discriminatory status vis-à-vis the nuclear-weapon States, non-nuclear-weapon States still face additional pressures aimed at imposing more obligations and restrictions on them in the form of additional safeguards, while ignoring the voluntary nature of any new international commitment and the inevitability of focusing first on the universality of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system, which is a necessary condition for any strengthening of it.

Egypt confirms the important priority that the IAEA technical cooperation work represents for it and other developing countries which benefit from such programmes for the use of nuclear technologies in the fields of, inter alia, health, agriculture, food, water resources, isotopes and radiation.

In this regard, Egypt welcomes the development and improvement of the IAEA technical cooperation strategy to better serve the developmental priorities of member States, including through the identification of vital fields which nuclear technologies can effectively support in the short- and medium-term. Accordingly, we reiterate the importance of strengthening the role of the IAEA in technology transfer through ensuring and increasing funds allocated for technical cooperation, that being one of its main statutory responsibilities.

Taking into consideration the role of the Agency as the international forum mandated to work multilaterally towards the application of the highest standards of nuclear safety in nuclear power reactors, and towards the extension of the benefits of nuclear power to developing countries, Egypt, in its efforts to rely on nuclear power in proceeding with its development course, closely follows the Agency's work in this field, in particular, through the International Project on Innovative Reactors and Fuel Cycles.

Egypt is also working on further expanding its cooperation with the Agency in order to enhance our national capabilities in the peaceful application of nuclear technologies as well as to explore increased benefits of such technologies for the purpose of generating electricity, and other peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

We look forward to the full support of the Agency for our endeavours.

Mr. Vundavalli (India): The delegation of India thanks the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for presenting the Agency's annual report to the General Assembly.

On the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, it is gratifying to recognize the IAEA's unique place within the United Nations system. The prestige, credibility and authority of the IAEA in this century rest in very large measure on the consistent good work done by its secretariat, under the wise leadership of Mr. ElBaradei.

Over the last half-century, the Agency's and India's nuclear programmes have grown and evolved side by side. The IAEA's achievements in the past half-century have done much to contribute to the emergence of a nuclear dawn in the coming years.

The world today is on the threshold of a paradigm shift. On the one hand, demand for energy continues to rise, and it is clear that 70 per cent of growth will come from developing countries. It is imperative that this need be met if the benefits of development are to be accessed more equitably by the vast majority of underprivileged mankind in the developing countries. On the other hand, there is the challenge of addressing the serious consequences for future generations of unmindful and unsustainable use of fossil energy leading to global warming and climate change.

Nuclear power can certainly play an important role in this context, by helping to meet the ever-growing demand for energy without the serious environmental consequences associated with the use of fossil fuels. India therefore notes and supports all the Agency's activities related to the promotion of nuclear power.

We believe that the Agency has a crucial role to play in allaying the misapprehensions of the public and Member States about the safe design, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of nuclear power plants, as well as the waste disposal and environmental aspects, taking into due account current advances in the relevant areas of design and technology. We encourage the publication of IAEA technical documents, the organization of training workshops and technical conferences and the maintenance and dissemination of nuclear knowledge to help achieve these objectives.

India has been pursuing its robust three-stage nuclear programme designed to maximize the energy potential from its domestic uranium and thorium resources, which will contribute around 25 per cent of electricity generation in the country by 2050. The objective is to realize the huge energy potential that can be obtained from these nuclear energy resources without having to add to the global carbon dioxide burden.

The programme is moving ahead steadily, with the first stage, consisting of indigenously developed pressurized heavy water reactors (PHWRs), well into a commercially successful phase. The second stage has commenced with the construction of a 500-megawatt electric (MWe) prototype fast breeder reactor, which is now fairly advanced. The third stage is about to begin with the start of construction of a technology demonstrator, the 300 MWe advanced heavy water reactor.

Those three stages are being implemented sequentially to reach the goal of large-scale thorium utilization, and are linked through their respective fuel cycles, which are also well under way. During the calendar year 2006, the generation of electricity from domestic nuclear power plants was 17,794 million units (MUs). While Unit 4 of the Rajasthan atomic power project operated continuously for a record 373 days, Unit 1 of the Kaiga atomic power station recorded uninterrupted operation for 356 days.

We look forward to the possibility of opening up international civil nuclear cooperation. We expect such cooperation to be sustainable, free from interruptions and consistent with our national policy of a closed fuel cycle. Such initiatives also open up the possibility of the export of reactors and services.

India today is the only country to have a live technology, design and infrastructure for small PHWRs with a unit capacity of 220 MWe; these reactors have a great potential for export, particularly to countries with small grids that wish to begin nuclear power generation with relatively modest investments and infrastructure. Given the large manufacturing base and relatively low manufacturing costs, there is also a potential for India to become a manufacturing hub for equipment and components for the global nuclear industry.

India supports all the Agency's activities related to advanced technologies, namely, accelerator-driven systems and high-temperature reactors for non-power applications such as hydrogen production and nuclear desalination. We attach great importance to the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles programme, have been associated with it since its inception, and have contributed significantly to its progress. We are happy to note the continued growth in its membership, and stand committed to ensuring the successful implementation of its Phase 2 activities.

In the area of material technology, we note with approval the Agency's activities aimed at improving the utilization of nuclear fuel for both light water reactors and PHWRs through increased burnup and the associated degradation and failure issues. In this context, in December 2006 India hosted in Mumbai an international conference on processing, performance and phenomena, and a satellite conference on materials behaviour far from equilibrium, in cooperation with the IAEA.

India commends the Agency for its activities related to capacity building and nuclear knowledge maintenance for sustainable energy development, aimed at providing training to several member States in using the analytical tools and databases, as detailed in the report.

We take note of and appreciate the Agency's work programme and achievements in nuclear applications in food and agriculture; human health and nutrition; the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy; water resources management; protection of the environment; and industry. India has donated a state of the art teletherapy machine, Bhabhatron II, to the Programme, with Viet Nam being the intended beneficiary. We note and support the Agency's activities envisaged under the rubric of nuclear science.

In the area of nuclear security and physical protection, India has organized a number of workshops and training courses for the Asia-Pacific region under the aegis of the IAEA. So far, we have conducted four regional training courses on physical protection of nuclear installations, as well as regional training courses on the physical protection of radioactive sources. In addition, we have conducted regional training courses on advanced equipment and responding to criminal unauthorized acts involving nuclear or other radioactive material, and a regulatory authority information system training course.

India is among the first countries to deposit their instrument of ratification of the amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We note with approval the round-the-clock operations of the Agency's Incident and Emergency Centre, the emergency preparedness review conducted by the Agency and the establishment of a centre for advanced safety assessments tools.

In the context of the safety of nuclear installations, we note with satisfaction the activities undertaken by the Agency to promote a safety culture in member States. In India, the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) completed peer reviews of the atomic power stations at Kakrapar, Narora, Kaiga, Rawatbhata and Tarapur. We have offered our third unit of the Tarapur atomic power project for a pre-startup peer review by a WANO team of experts. Similar reviews for the fifth unit of the Rajasthan atomic power project and the fourth unit of the Kaika atomic power project are also planned for the next year.

India attaches high priority to nuclear verification, and notes with approval all the activities undertaken by the Agency in a transparent and impartial manner. Our delegation has actively participated in the Special Committee on Safeguards and Verification, within the framework of the IAEA Statute, to consider ways and means to strengthen the safeguards system.

A global nuclear energy renaissance increasingly appears not just inevitable, but a necessity. However, it

will rest on fragile foundations unless robust inclusive partnerships are built on the basis of trust and mutual understanding, functioning on a reliable and predictable basis. The adoption of closed fuel cycle options to maximize energy availability needs to be an integral part of that.

We have justifiable concerns about the risks related to the safety of the environment and proliferation arising from irresponsible behaviour of States and non-State actors. However, we need to be even more concerned about the vastly enhanced security risks to which future generations will be exposed as a result of the storage of spent fuel for tens of thousands of years.

There are, thus, risks and challenges, but they are within the professional competence of existing technology and institutional control. Answers can easily be found, if every responsible partner is seen not as a problem, but as part of the solution.

Mr. Gatan (Philippines): The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been a success story during the 50 years of its existence — in particular, in the pursuit of its dual purpose of promoting nuclear energy for development and ensuring nuclear safety and security — in spite of the numerous challenges it has faced.

The Philippines welcomes the report of the Agency, and recognizes once again its important role in promoting both peace and development.

The Philippines has been a member and a partner of the IAEA for 49 of the 50 years of Agency's life and has gained much from its collaboration with the Agency. That strong partnership has also helped the Philippines in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Philippines attaches great importance to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its vast benefits for all nations, particularly the developing world. My country and the Agency have expansive links in the area of technical cooperation. It is here that we have much success in terms of increasing agricultural and industrial productivity, the irradiation of food exports, access to clean drinking water and addressing environmental challenges.

My delegation is grateful to the Agency's Technical Cooperation Department — specifically, its Asia and Pacific division and the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, whose support and effective collaboration enabled the Philippines to achieve an implementation rate of 84 per cent for technical projects in 2006. Much of that success has filtered down to the grassroots level. The Agency's technical assistance has also enabled the Philippines Nuclear Research Institute to upgrade its multipurpose irradiation facility and non-destructive testing training centre, as well as to establish its national environment isotope laboratory.

My country's participation in the Regional Cooperative Agreement's projects on the environment, such as those on air pollution, has enabled us to undertake several environmental studies using nuclear techniques. Data culled from those studies have provided important information in terms of implementing national laws and regulations on the environment.

Another essential programme is the Agency's Programme of Action on Cancer Therapy (PACT). The Philippines is pleased to note that the Agency has made that a priority activity, given the rise in the number of cancer patients, including in the developing world. My delegation believes that collaboration with PACT could lead to enhanced cancer-training capabilities in the region, in the context of the regional cancer training network. The Philippines is therefore grateful for the large contribution of donor countries, which helped built the Programme.

My delegation welcomes the comprehensive report of the Agency and commends its work in the areas of nuclear safety, verification, security and disarmament, and even social issues under its mandate, such as poverty, disease and hunger. Among the important activities of the Agency cited in its report are capacity-building and nuclear-knowledge maintenance for sustainable development.

Other vital aspects of the report are nuclear science, allowing for its application to economic development; food and agriculture, focusing on achieving food security through the application of nuclear techniques; human health, which deals with enhancing the capacities of member States to detect, prevent and treat various illnesses through nuclear technology; and, finally, water resources, where the sustainable management of this essential resource is improved through isotope application.

Nuclear security is another important area of concern. The support that the Agency provides to member States is essential to establishing effective national nuclear security regimes and preventing nuclear accidents. The Philippines agrees that the high standards of safety for nuclear power facilities should be maintained, especially given the increasing number of nuclear power plants. One nuclear accident can lead to massive environmental damage, endangering millions of innocent civilians.

In conclusion, I once again commend the Agency for its work in promoting the use of the atom for peace. Indeed, mankind will benefit from the atom's peaceful use. It can spur development, cure illnesses, increase the production of food and provide energy for our world's growing population.

My delegation urges all delegations to sponsor the draft resolution on the IAEA's report.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the 2006 IAEA report. I commend him very warmly for his commitment and dedication to the mandate of this important Agency and for its continuing work in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

My delegation expresses its sincere appreciation for the role of the IAEA in the promotion of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, under the three pillars of its mandate, including through technical cooperation between the Agency and my country. I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for last December's official visit by the Director General to several countries in Asia, including Indonesia, as further proof of the Agency's attention to the importance of the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in our region.

Over the past several years the role of nuclear power has been shaped by many factors. We are pleased that the IAEA has been emphasizing the role of nuclear energy and nuclear technology for development. Indeed, it is becoming more evident that the IAEA has an important role to play in myriad aspects of human life, thereby contributing to meeting the world's growing energy demands and other welfare needs.

The report again highlights the rising expectations of nuclear energy in different parts of the world, especially for electricity generation. We are encouraged to learn that the Asia-Pacific region is one of the most dynamic in the world in terms of nuclear power development, and that national and regional projects have been conducted by the Agency under its Technical Cooperation Programme in response to the needs of member States.

Let me note, in this regard, that the Agency's promotion of the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy is particularly important for Indonesia and the region. As a country with more than 200 million people, bearing in mind the current situation of energy resources, we are now at the stage of dissemination of information and education to the public about the necessity for nuclear energy and its important role in our sustainable development. Along with its decision to embark on a nuclear power programme, Indonesia is also taking steps to promulgate relevant national regulation and continue its close cooperation with the IAEA in this regard.

Recently the IAEA has broadened awareness of the role of nuclear energy in the challenge of climate change. Climate change concerns have highlighted the advantages of nuclear power in terms of its minimal greenhouse gas emissions. This is an issue of great interest to Indonesia, as host of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Bali in December.

Indonesia has always attached paramount importance to technical cooperation with the Agency in connection with the transfer of nuclear science and technology to member States, and as a basic instrument for promoting peaceful uses of atomic energy for sustainable socio-economic development. In this regard, under an agreement with the IAEA, in 2007 and 2008 Indonesia will implement eight projects in the fields of energy, food and agriculture, human health and the environment.

The Agency has been working with Indonesia on radiation-induced breeding for inventing new varieties of plants, and many new and improved varieties of staple food crops were released up to 2006. This year, high-quality rice mutant varieties produced by irradiation techniques were planted in Indonesia on over a million hectares. Several new higher-quality strains of crops have been developed with IAEA cooperation.

Indonesia has also enjoyed the Agency's support in the commissioning of its first radiotherapy centre, in

Kalimantan, expected to be operational by the end of the year, and in the development of isotopic techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of tuberculosis drugs. Some IAEA technical cooperation projects have focused on using nuclear techniques to assess and manage Indonesia's underground water resources, monitor water quality and pollution in Indonesian rivers and improve livestock nutrition.

In the light of the increasing needs and requests of member States for technical cooperation, it is essential that the Agency have sufficient, assured and predictable resources for its activities. For that purpose, we suggest that proposals for a more sufficient, predictable and assured Technical Cooperation Fund be developed, with a view to strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's technical cooperation activities, without imposing an additional financial burden on member States, especially developing countries.

In view of the numerous challenges facing the IAEA, and the need to preserve its efficiency and performance, we should continue to seek ways to enhance its resources. To this end, we look forward to the upcoming study by a high-level panel of experts on the Agency's future programmatic and budgetary requirements, including the financing of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

My delegation also stresses the importance of the Agency's pursuing a more balanced allocation of the budget so as to reflect the equal importance of its three pillars and to maintain a balance between its various statutory activities and the need to promote technical cooperation.

For its part, Indonesia has been supportive of technical cooperation activities and has consistently paid its pledged annual share of the Technical Cooperation Fund targets. We will continue to do so in the future.

My delegation places great importance on the Agency's measures to strengthen nuclear safety and security. We share the view that measures to strengthen nuclear security should not hamper international cooperation in peaceful nuclear activities, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. As an archipelagic State, Indonesia is concerned about potential accidents or incidents during the transportation of spent fuel, high-level nuclear waste and radioactive materials by sea. We continue to support the efforts of the IAEA to strengthen cooperation and coordination to address this issue.

In the field of safety and security, Indonesia is a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. As to the security of radioactive sources and safety of the community and environment in the use of nuclear energy, we are pleased to announce that Government Regulation Number 33 of 2007 on the Safety of Ionizing Radiation and Security of Radioactive Sources, based on the IAEA Basic Standards, was enacted in June 2007.

Indonesia appreciates the work carried out by the Agency in implementing and strengthening safeguards and verification pursuant to the provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a State party to the NPT, we are committed to fully implementing the integrated safeguards, which could lead to strengthening global nuclear non-proliferation, pursuing nuclear disarmament and facilitating cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

At the regional level, as a party to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and bearing in mind the importance of such a zone in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation, Indonesia, along with the other nine States parties to the Treaty, has initiated and tabled for the first time a draft resolution on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone at this sixty-second session.

We take note of the call for the development of new, multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle as a measure for strengthening non-proliferation and coping with the expected expansion of the use of nuclear power. As a party to the NPT, Indonesia fully supports the inalienable right of States parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in accordance with article IV. We reiterate that each country's choice and decision on the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be respected, without undermining its national policies or international cooperation agreements and arrangements for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its fuel-cycle policies.

My delegation once again voices its concern about the continued inability to establish a nuclear-

weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the continuously defiant attitude and policy of a single country in the region regarding placing its nuclear installations under the IAEA safeguards or acceding to the NPT. We caution that this could exacerbate the situation in the region and impact negatively on efforts to prevent proliferation there.

Turning to our own region, Indonesia stresses the importance of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula for the maintenance of peace and stability in the region. We are therefore pleased with the current positive development concerning the implementation of arrangements agreed between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the IAEA for monitoring and verification by the Agency of the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities, as part of the complete declaration of the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic.

We welcome the work plan contained in the Understandings of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IAEA on the Modalities of Resolution of the Outstanding Issues. We consider it to be a step in the right direction for continued and more intensive cooperation between Iran and the IAEA towards resolving the outstanding issues. We are of the view that timely implementation of the work plan is the key to a peaceful and statutory resolution of the Iranian issues, and favour more intensive dialogue on this issue among all interested parties.

In closing, I reiterate my Government's commitment to supporting the Agency in the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; in ensuring that the benefits of nuclear technology are shared globally, especially to benefit developing countries; in conducting safe, peaceful nuclear activities; and in providing a framework for curbing nuclear-weapon proliferation and moving towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): It gives me particular pleasure to extend a warm welcome to New York to Director General Mohamed ElBaradei and to express my appreciation for his presentation of the detailed annual report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As the IAEA is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year, I express my heartfelt congratulations to the Director General and the staff of the IAEA, whose work has greatly contributed to the Agency's healthy development.

In recent years energy demands have expanded and global warming has intensified. Nuclear power generation is expected to expand worldwide as a means to ensure a steady energy supply and combat global warming. Last May Japan introduced a new proposal, "Cool Earth 50", to address global warming. As part of a proposal to establish an effective post-2012 international framework, Japan will promote international efforts to expand safe and peaceful uses of nuclear power and provide assistance, such as infrastructure development, for the introduction of nuclear power to developing countries.

In introducing and expanding the use of nuclear energy, it is essential to ensure nuclear non-proliferation, safety and security. From that perspective, the role of the IAEA has become ever more important. The Agency has prepared a document, "Milestones in the development of a national infrastructure for nuclear power", which provides guidelines for infrastructure development when introducing nuclear power generation. Japan highly appreciates such an effort by the Agency.

Japan has strictly limited the use of nuclear energy solely to peaceful purposes since the enactment of its Atomic Energy Basic Law in 1955, when nuclear power was first introduced in Japan. Since then we have come a long way in gaining international confidence through, among other measures, faithful implementation of our IAEA safeguards agreement, concluded in 1977, the early conclusion of our additional protocol and the implementation of integrated safeguards.

In Japan further expanded utilization of nuclear energy is expected. Japan continues to uphold its established policy on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy through the strict application of safeguards.

The international community currently faces a number of serious challenges, such as the nuclear issues concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and the threat of nuclear terrorism. The unanimous adoption of Security Council resolutions against those threats demonstrates the strong will of the international community. Japan welcomes the concerted efforts of the international community to address those threats and calls upon all Member States to implement the relevant resolutions.

The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was held in Vienna from April to May this year, under the chairmanship of Japan's resident representative in Vienna, Ambassador Amano. Despite some difficulties, the Preparatory Committee reached common recognition of the need to promote all three pillars of the NPT: namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Committee therefore made a good start towards the success of the 2010 Review Conference. It was an important step in reinforcing the NPT regime.

The strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system is vital to reinforcing the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Japan believes that universalization of the additional protocol is the most realistic and effective way to achieve that objective. Japan, as the initiator of the Friends of the Additional Protocol, has been implementing various activities for that purpose, focusing on the Asian region. Progress has been made, with the number of countries that have concluded additional protocols increasing from 39 to 83 over the past three years. I take this opportunity to call upon those States that have not yet concluded additional protocols to do so as soon as possible.

The nuclear test proclaimed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in October last year, combined with its buildup of ballistic-missile capabilities, is a threat to the peace and security of not only Japan, but also East Asia and the entire international community. It represents a serious challenge to the NPT regime. In that respect, it is important that Security Council resolution 1718 (2006) be steadfastly implemented.

It is a welcome development that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has committed itself, in the Six-Party Talks outcome document issued on 3 October, to the declaration of all nuclear programmes and the disablement of the three facilities at Yongbyon, as measures to be taken in the second phase. That action follows implementation of the initial actions agreed earlier at the Six-Party Talks, including the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. It is above all most important that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea fully implement those commitments.

Japan continues to actively work towards a peaceful resolution of nuclear issues within the framework of the Six-Party Talks with a view to comprehensively resolving outstanding matters, such as abductions, nuclear and missile issues, settling the unfortunate past and realizing the normalization of relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the basis of the Pyongyang Declaration by it and Japan.

Japan has made a positive contribution to the Agency's monitoring and verification activities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Iran regrettably continues to expand its uranium enrichment-related activities, in defiance of calls from the international community. Japan hopes that Iran will sincerely cooperate with the IAEA in the consultations currently being held between it and the IAEA in attempts to resolve outstanding issues. It should be noted, however, that resolving those outstanding issues alone will not remove all the concerns of the international community regarding Iran's nuclear programme. Iran has to make further efforts to restore the confidence of the international community by responding sincerely to the requirements set forth by the relevant resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council, including suspension of uranium enrichment-related activities and the heavy-water-related programme, as well as ratification and implementation of the additional protocol. Japan continues to work for a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the issue, in concert with the other members of the international community.

With many important challenges accumulating, the importance of the IAEA can only increase. I assure the Assembly of Japan's continued support for the IAEA in fulfilling its vital mission.

Finally, I would like to express our full support for the draft resolution submitted by Chile, of which we are a sponsor.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.